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The Quest for Ethnic Recognition in Spain:
The Basques and Catalans

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of a Degree with Honors in International Affairs

by

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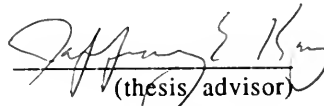
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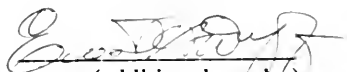
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The Quest for Ethnic Recognition in Spain:
The Basques and Catalans

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Senior Honors Thesis
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The Quest for Ethnic Recognition in Spain:

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What makes a person feel that he or she is part of an ethnic heritage? Many times an ethnic language affects the thinking of such individuals. Other times, living in a particular area of a country influences thoughts and ideas. No matter what the reason for thinking uniquely, minority ethnic movements around the world suddenly have gained attention:

...it seems that ethnic movements are finally starting to be considered a vital part of the political panorama of the contemporary world....As is well known, a central feature of ethnonationalist claims is their focus on requests for cultural autonomy. However, the definition of ethnic/national culture varies considerably among (and within) the different movements, although most of them tend to emphasize language as the main issue and concern. (Conversi 50-1)

Spain has had difficulties with minority languages and

autonomy movements. The two politically strongest ethnic minorities are the Basques and the Catalans. These two regions have developed their languages and political beliefs in two very different ways.

The Catalan language has always been a center around which Catalan political movements were created. The Basques, on the other hand, developed their politics around other aspects in their society, such as their race and religion. Both ethnicities are just beginning to realize that other aspects of a society, such as culture and a self-sufficient economy, are necessary for gaining independence from Spain. Even so, the citizens of the regions have so many different opinions about autonomy, that these movements may never gain the cultural and political independence they seek.

What follows is a comparative thesis, commenting upon the events that helped shape each region's way of thinking. This paper is divided into subsections examining specific aspects of each of the cultures. They are compared side by side with a strong emphasis on the historic events that helped shape the regions' policies. There is also an emphasis on the language within politics. Understandably however, the language is not the only aspect that influences the regions.

They are also affected by cultural, historic, economic, and political development of the region. And although the language is important, and probably a source of the feeling of nationalism behind these particular movements, language is not the only source, and may not even be a principal one.

History and Demographics

Before one can fully appreciate the problems these ethnicities have had as they developed in the shadow of Castile's, and later Spain's influence, one must know something about the nations involved themselves. Spain's territory, (including these separate societies) takes up roughly three-fourths of the Iberian peninsula in southwestern Europe. It is bordered by the Cantabrian Sea to the northwest, and Portugal to the west (this is the only section of the Iberian peninsula not under control of Madrid.) The southwest faces the Atlantic Ocean, the southeast the Mediterranean Sea, and the northeast forms the connection with the European continent. Over the natural boundary of the Pyrenees Mountains lies France.



Fig. 1. Map featuring Spain. Enciclopedia Hispánica v.6
(Mexico: Encyclopaedia Britannica Inc. 1990-1991) 42

Because it is on a peninsula, Spain is geographically isolated from the rest of Europe. Perhaps for this reason, the majority of the Spaniards tend to be inward looking. They have a long history, and many factors were responsible for the formation of the nation of Spain.

One factor was the Moorish invasion in 711 AD. Up until this invasion, the area which is now Spain was inhabited by Christian Goths and the Romans. The Moors invaded from North Africa, and in little more than a decade, had conquered all

of the peninsula. The Christian kingdoms were forced north up to the Cantabrian coast. These small kingdoms, (the Basque Country, León, Castile, Aragon and Catalonia) fought back against the Moorish invaders. It would not be until seven hundred years later that the Christians would successfully drive the Moors back to northern Africa.

During those seven centuries of fighting, the Christian kingdoms grew stronger and stronger against the Moorish forces. The kingdom of Castile was one of the fastest growing regions. With each Moorish retreat, Castile grew in territorial space, and military might. Castile began influencing other kingdoms, and incorporating them under its rule. These kingdoms included the Basque Country and León. Yet Castile was not just conquering regions, but also forming alliances with them.

In 1469 Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabel of Castile were united in marriage. This also united the two strongest Christian kingdoms. They started ruling jointly in 1479, thus forming what became modern Spain. On 1 January 1492, the combined forces of the Christians stormed the last Moorish stronghold in Spain, the Alhambra in Granada. This

move successfully defeated the Moors and sent many of them back to Africa.

After the completion of the reconquest of Spain, Aragon and Castile entered an unstable political alliance. Initially, the powers of the two forces were supposed to be equal. In fact, the Castilians began influencing and changing these political situations. Castile had in effect conquered all of the kingdoms. (Aragon originally had both the Valencian Province and the Principality of Catalonia under its power (Elliott 54). Because of the combination of Aragon and Castile, Catalonia found itself indirectly under the control of Castile. Thus, the two politically strongest minority cultures, the Basques and the Catalans, were submerged under Castile's control.

Through the years, the two regions would give Madrid the majority of its regional political problems. Both ethnicities would resort to violence. Both provinces would claim that they deserved autonomy because the history of their regions, the cultures and the languages were different from Castile's. Many citizens in the regions felt they were not Spaniards. A large part of the population considered

themselves Basques and Catalans before they considered themselves Spanish.

The Basque Country or *Euzkadi* as it is known to the Basques, borders the Bay of Biscay to the northwest and the Pyrenees Mountain Range to the North and East. It is technically part of geographic Spain and France.

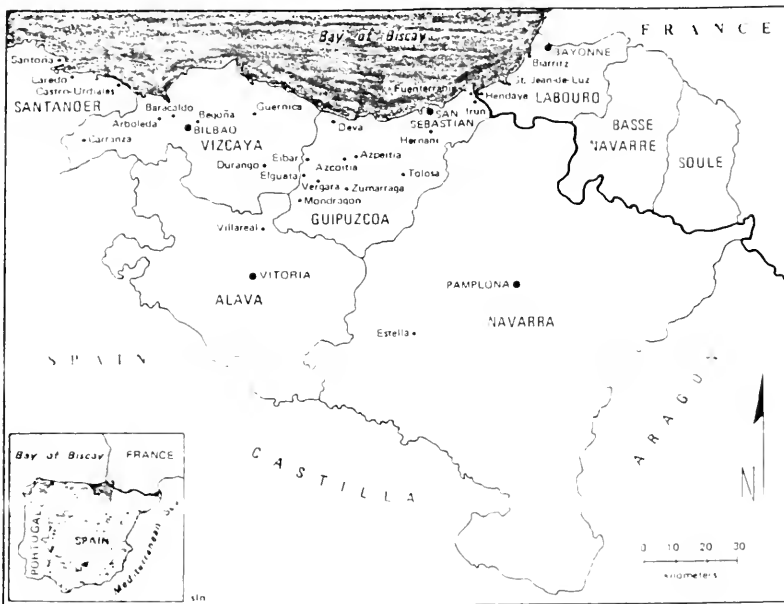


Fig. 2. Map featuring Basque Country. Payne, Basque Nationalism (Nevada: Nevada UP, 1978) np.

This area, which covers little more than 20,000 sq km has about 2,300,000 inhabitants. 90% of these inhabitants live on the Spanish side of the border. The geographical location

is one reason why the Basques have always been separate from Spain, France, and even from the rest of Europe.

The geographic isolation has also hindered historians from finding out much about the history of the region and the development of the culture. Historians do know that the Basque people are an ancient one. The Altamira caves in the middle of the Basque country have some of the oldest cave paintings on record. They date back to 20,000BCE.

Yet the development of this group or tribe of people must have been extremely slow. There is no real record (after the cave paintings) of their existence, until the 9th century, as barbarians fighting the Romans. Nevertheless, the Basques were civilized enough to be making political agreements between their separate villages. In one compact from the ninth century, Pamplona declared itself an independent state.

The ninth century also saw tremendous social and political development for the Basque region. One man responsible for many of the changes was Sancho Gracés III, also known as Sancho the Great. Through arranged marriages, he unified the Basque Country for a short duration and claimed title to the role of sovereign for the majority of the Basque country. He also expanded the Basques influence further than it would

ever be again; "For the next few years, all Basque-inhabited territory south of the Pyrenees recognized a single Basque political sovereignty for the first and last time in history" (Payne 14).

The problems came when Sancho divided the kingdom between his four sons. This division led to a series of civil wars, and the Basques began to lose their grip on the unity they had secured under the power of Sancho the Great. At this point, the Basques lost control over their homeland and were annexed into the stronger Castilian province.

Through the years, the Castilian monarch would then continually try to influence the decisions made within the Basque territory. Although by 1200 the regions were actually part of the Castilian territory, they considered themselves autonomous. Most regions did not even acknowledge the Castilian king. The Basques never successfully formed a "nation" in the practical sense. For the majority of their political history, the Basque villages remained separate and even antagonistic towards one another. Due to the lack of nationalism, the Basque Country fell under the auspices of Castile very quickly.

The Catalan society developed very differently than Basque society. Although the Catalans are not as "old" as the

Basques, their society was more cohesive than that of their northern neighbors. Catalonia was:

...a roughly triangular territory, wedged somewhat uneasily between France, Aragon and the sea...The northern side of the triangle was formed by the line of the Pyrenees; the western side by the plateaux that ran southwards from the Pyrenees and by the river Ebro; its base, by the long coastline of the Mediterranean. Inside this triangle, of some fourteen thousand square miles, lay the Principality of Catalonia. (Elliott 22)

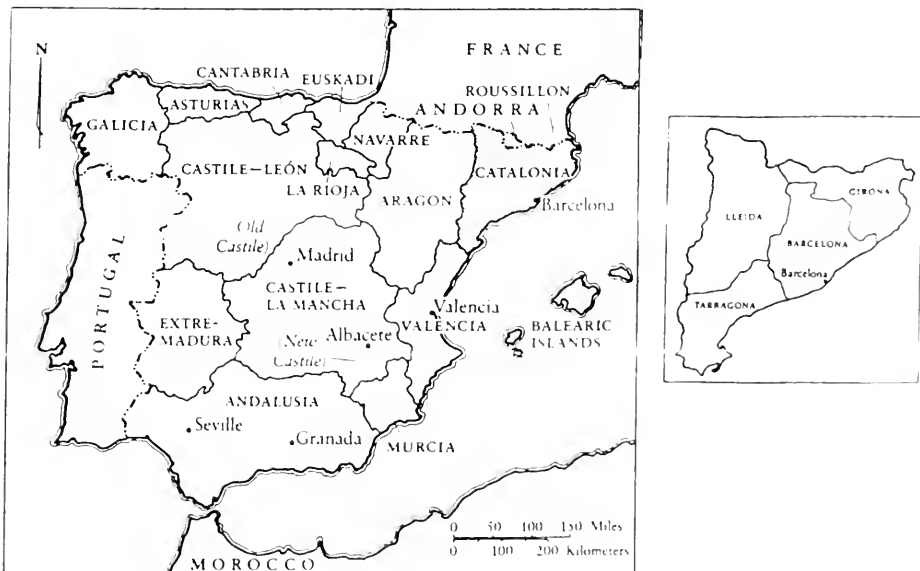


Fig. 3. Map emphasizing Catalonia. Double Talk..., (Stanford, CA: Stanford UP, 1989) 3.

The original ancestors of the Catalans were Greeks, Romans, Goths and Gauls. The Goths lived on the northeast coast of the peninsula before the Moorish invasion. When the Moors did invade, they drove the Goths north, over the Pyrenees:

The reconquest of the lands deserted by the Christians of the Mediterranean coast was undertaken by the people of [Southern] Gaul. Once across the Pyrenees, the Moors had continued northwards and taken Narbonne; their advance was at last arrested when the Frankish Charles Martel defeated them...This movement liberated Narbonne in 759, and then, under the supreme command of Louis 'le debonnaire,' the Christian army crossed the Pyrenees, and liberated Girona in 785--or shortly there before-- and Barcelona in 801. (Trueta 6-7)

After the Gauls had beaten back the Moors (at least on the coastline) they began to influence the Catalan's social and political systems to a high degree. For many years, the House of Gaul kept watch over what was considered Southern Gaul. A now extinct nation called Provençal developed from this nurturing.

Provençal had its own language and territory, and was a

forerunner to the Catalan society. Yet this new nation would not last very long. By 1137 the House of Barcelona, in Southern Gaul, married into the Aragon kingdom in the peninsula. This sealed the contract between the two kingdoms and they became known as the kingdom of Aragon and Catalonia.

The Provençal nation was not content with this new alliance, and fought to regain the Southern Gaul region. This battle continued for several years. The end of this continuing struggle occurred when King James I signed the Treaty of Corbeil in 1258 renouncing the rights to the Southern Gaul region. This treaty was responsible for creating Catalonia's boundary lines and making it what it is (Trueta 12).

For many years, Catalonia enjoyed autonomy, as a nation known as the Principality of Catalonia under Aragonese rule. The Principality was even responsible for the line of succession to the kingdom's throne. But at the beginning of the 14th century the Catalans were facing problems. The region had economic problems and an epidemic of plague spreading throughout the land:

Another [problem] was the progressive encroachment of

Castilian influence begun when the last Catalan sovereign, Martin the Humane, died without an heir and was succeeded in 1412 by a Castilian, Ferdinand of Antequera. The latter's grandson, Ferdinand of Aragon, married Isabel of Castile in 1469 thus bridging together the two crowns. (Azevedo 307)

These brief histories only show how the Basque Country and Catalonia fell under the control of Castile. What is much more important about the histories of these minority nations is the development of their languages. Both regions developed languages distinct from Castilian Spanish. The language development parallels the political histories of the regions.

Languages

The language situation in Spain can be stated very simply. The majority Castilian Spanish language is used in every province and is the official language for the central government. Two minority languages, Catalan and Euskera (from the Basque country) are only official in their specific provinces. These languages have survived through years of

repression under different regimes. While both languages are very important to their specific modern autonomy movements, symbolically, like the nations they represent, they have very different developmental histories.

The Catalan language was formulated and standardized very quickly. In fact, an earlier form of the language called Catalan/Provençal came into existence while Catalonia was still part of the Provençal nationality (Azevedo 306). It was a combination of Latin, French, and Spanish. The Catalan language evolved out of this linguistic ancestor:

The earliest documents written entirely in Catalan date from the second half of the eleventh century. In somewhat earlier Latin documents, however, Catalan words and phrases appear in the text in increasing numbers, showing the gradual development of the vernacular. It is a fact of interest that Catalan has preserved the original idiom with greater persistency than any other Romance language. (Gili 66)

Technically speaking, Catalan has 26 letters in the alphabet with five vowels just like English. It is spoken in Catalonia, Valencia, southern regions of France, the Balearic

Islands, and in Andorra, where it is the official language (Paulston 47). Despite the language's broad geographic range, there is very little dialectical difference in any of the regions. One reason critics suggest Catalan does not have dialect problems was its common use as a "diplomatic language." Azevedo writes:

Regional use notwithstanding, medieval Catalan was highly uniform, largely because of the standardizing influence of its role as a chancery language in which were written the chronicles of the Catalan sovereigns and several juridical works such as the first European code of Maritime law (Llibre del Consolat de Mar, 13th Century). (306)

Azevedo also claims that Catalan, for all intents and purposes, had all the makings of becoming a major Romance language. Because it was a literary medium for poets during the Middle Ages, it produced works equal or comparable to that of French or Spanish poets. (308) Yet, the Catalan language never achieved a great amount of influence outside of its region.

Many experts claim there were several reasons that Catalan

never became a major Romance language. These include the economic problems of the fourteenth century, the spreading of endemic plagues, and a growing Castilian influence. It has already been stated a Castilian king ascended to the Catalan throne in 1412 (pg.13).

By the time the Castilians completely ruled over the Aragonese and Catalonian kingdom, speaking Catalan was held in an unfavorable social light. Only rural farmers and uneducated people were still speaking Catalan regularly. The Catalan nobility had "merged" with the Castilian nobility and were speaking Castilian. The Spanish language was a sign of prestige and power. Thus, Philip II, finding Catalan an obstacle to absolute rule, outlawed the use of Catalan with few protests.

There were attempts to revive the language through the years. Depending on the regime, Catalan was outlawed or allowed. Even though the language was not constantly used, Catalan did not wane from "popular" bourgeois use. In the nineteenth century it had a sudden revival. It was called the "Renaixença" of the 1840s and 1850s; "It was the aim of the 'renaissance'...to revive Catalan as the literary tongue

it had been in medieval times" (Carr 62). The renaissance made great strides towards making Catalan a world language once again by creating a new sense of nationalism (which had been lost) behind the language. Yet although the repercussions of the renaissance would be felt for a long while, it was not a permanent rebirth for the language.

The standardization of Catalan stands in marked contrast to the Basques language which developed several dialects. The Basques villages were geographically separated from one another and the language had no homogenizing influence; therefore, linguistic unity did not develop. The following chart of the various dialects of Euskera demonstrates the Basques linguistic diversity.

Table 1

<u>Labourdin</u>	<u>Guipúzcoan</u>	<u>Souletin</u>	<u>Biscayan</u>
<i>naiz</i>	<i>naiz</i>	<i>niz</i>	<i>naz</i>
<i>gare</i>	<i>gera</i>	<i>gira</i>	<i>gara</i>
<i>zarete</i>	<i>zerate</i>	<i>ziraye</i>	<i>zaree</i>
<i>dut</i>	<i>det</i>	<i>dyt</i>	<i>dot</i>
<i>dugu</i>	<i>degu</i>	<i>dugu</i>	<i>dogu</i>
<i>ditut</i>	<i>ditut</i>	<i>dutut</i>	<i>ditudaz</i>

Source: Houghton 3 (1961).

What is important in this chart is the fact that these are

representations of some words in only some of the different dialects.

Unlike Catalan with no noticeable dialects, there are seven Basque dialects. The linguist, Prince Louis Lucien Bonaparte, categorized the various dialects. He divided the dialects into three main categories, and in each category they appear to be somehow related, or at least somewhat similar to one another. Yet great differences still remain. Even the names for the Basque country itself are different in different provinces (Houghton 3).

The only way the dialects appear related are through technical comparisons. For example, in all dialects, the Basque language has only 20 letters in the alphabet. The verbs (in all the dialects) tend to be conjugated in the same way, but differences in pronunciation may make the dialects seem vastly different to an outsider.

The language's linguistic roots present another enigma to linguists. Catalan has been traced back through its linguistic development to Latin; there are no definite correlations between Euskera and any other language. In the mid-nineteenth century several theories were created about

the linguistic ancestors of Basque. In 1825 Bidassouet claimed that the Euskera was the language of creation, and that until the Tower of Babel, it was the only language in existence. Yet another theory from later in the same century, developed by de Larramendi, claimed that Euskera was one of the 75 languages in existence after the Tower of Babel (Tovar 10). The only fact linguists can prove is that Euskera existed in or around 1500 BCE.

Modern linguists say it could be related to Georgian. (Georgian is a language from Georgia, related to Russian.) There have been several attempts to try and decide where the language came from since the discovery of the possible correlation of Georgian. All the attempts so far, have been unsuccessful.

Thus, Euskera does not seem to be like any other language known to man because of its many dialects and obscure past. Neither can Euskera be used in today's society. For example, in the Basque language the numerical system does not exceed numbers over 1000 (Wheeler 86). For this reason, many Basques citizens do not feel it is necessary to learn a version of Euskera. In contrast, over 70% of the Catalans

know their language. Because of the lack of Euskera speakers, the Basque political leaders under-emphasized the language as a call for autonomy, even though one critic has called it, "the most overt distinguishing feature of Basque ethnicity" (Clark The Basques 7).

Besides the fact that the majority of Basque citizens do not speak Euskera, it is easy to understand why the political leaders did not emphasize the importance of language as Catalonia did. Because of the many dialects and strange grammatical rules, their language has negative aspects:

The language not only separated Basque from Spanish speakers, it also separated Basque from Basque because of dialectical differences which made mutual comprehension often impossible. (Heiberg 79)

The language is not unified enough to help the Basques gain a sense of who they are, and consequently, help the region to lead itself to autonomy from Spain.

Languages and Politics

Language has often been the basis of nationalist movements. When a population is linguistically

homogeneous, language may contribute to the unity and political stability of a state. When, on the other hand, a country contains sizable minorities speaking different languages, competing micronationalist movements may arise, posing serious challenges to an established state. (Shabad 443)

This trend can be seen in the problems between the centralized government and the Basques and the Catalans. However, a parallel idea can be seen within the Basque region itself. Because there are so many different dialects that are not interchangeable, the region literally has several different "minority" languages, which is one possible reason why the Basques have such a hard time unifying the region behind causes. The existence of the different dialects may also be why Basque political leaders have always de-emphasized the importance of their language. Conversi claims each society:

...tends to emphasize a peculiar aspect of its own cultural tradition that is held to be of paramount importance. Such an element can vary from community to community. In some of them it is the religion that is

manifested as a differentiating factor...in other groups this role is assumed by the family; yet in others it is the race. The most universal core value in the contemporary world, however, is language. (52)

The Catalans have always emphasized the language. After years of emphasizing race and strict Catholicism, the Basques have just begun to realize the importance of their language. Nationalism in these two societies is rooted in their decisions to choose language or race as their society's core value. Conversi continues:

...[a] main contrast between Catalan and Basque nationalisms is the different emphasis they place upon the language: in the former case it has been a core value, whereas in the latter it has had a much more ambiguous role. Language was displaced by race, at least in the earliest formulations of Sabino Arana (1865-1903) the putative father of modern Basque nationalism. (58)

The lack of emphasis on language seemed reasonable to the Basque political leaders. The region considered one other aspect more important than Euskera--their race. The Basques

have always considered themselves a separate race from other Iberians. Physically, the Basques are different from other Spaniards or Europeans. Some anthropologists say the Basques are a separate race. Reasons behind this claim include the existence of a strange rH negative blood factor, blood type (usually B negative), and their height, as they tend to be shorter than the average person. Many critics however, do not think these physical aspects are reason enough to assume that the Basques constitute a distinct race (Payne, Basque, 9).

Another reason language was de-emphasized was the rurality of the Basque region. The effects of geographic separation on the formation of dialects has already been mentioned. The fractured mother language could not be considered a cohesive force, thus, "the poor diffusion of Euskera prompted Basque nationalist intellectuals and intelligentsia to overlook the language, particularly in the earliest phase of the nationalist movement" (Conversi 51).

It was not until the late 1950s and early 1960s that the concept of Basque nationalism, emphasized through language, seemed to have a rebirth. By this time however, the Basque

language was not commonly being used. Fewer than 1/3 of the Basque citizens knew the language due to Franco's prohibition of its use. Today Basques consider themselves Basque without being able to speak the language. Race and family lineage are still considered the most important factors in society.

Unlike the politically and consciously created Basque nationalism based on race, Catalonia's nationalism developed gradually over the centuries. The Catalan empire reinforced the nationalistic feelings. They achieved this reinforcement of Catalanism through one specific item that remained constantly tied to politics--language. Unlike the Basques, they did not have the distinction of constituting another race; thus, the language became a rallying point and a firm base for Catalan nationalism or Catalanism:

In the writings of most Catalan intellectuals we find a persistent concern for the fate of the language. This continual effort gave Catalan nationalism its strength and stability. It acted as a firm standpoint for negotiations with Madrid, which in its turn has seen this emphasis on culture as a stable point of reference for improving its relations with the periphery during

the democratic phases of Spanish history. (Conversi 62)

Still, legal use of Catalan has not always been a guaranteed right. Philip III outlawed its use, as did Primo de Rivera and Franco. But while these regimes did their best to undermine the Catalan language, they never succeeded. Although the higher classes tended to use Castilian, the middle and lower classes kept using Catalan. It was their mother tongue.

Language has always been the hub of Catalan politics. Although Castilian was used for all official purposes, Catalan tended to be used in private places. From use in these situations, the middle class began using the language as a political statement against Madrid. This was most evident during the Renaissance of Catalan in the 1840s and 1850s.

One of the first uses of the language as a political statement took place in 1859. It was the recreation or reinstatement of the Joc Florals or Floral Games. These games during the Middle Ages were contests for travelling troubadours throughout the kingdom. They were started as "a refuge for the Catalan tongue in all its purity..." But:

...the Joc Florals were far more than just a literary game with prizes. Until well into the 1880s they were the building institution, the "spinal column" of the Catalan Renaixença; they were proof that the Catalan language was the conduit of elevated national sentiment.

(Hughes 298)

Because of the linguistic rebirth, Catalanism suddenly became a focus for all Catalans. Political parties started forming--some crying for a solution within the borders of Spain; other more radical parties demanded immediate autonomy. Here again is the difference between the Basques and Catalans; the Basque parties created nationalism while Catalan linguistic nationalism created parties.

Through the years, the idea that Catalans had a right to speak Catalan experienced setbacks and advances. Even with the change in frequency of use, the language showed resounding resiliency. Today, with the new 1979 Constitution and Article 3, Catalan lawmakers are still using the language as a basis of autonomy. Yet some critics claim Catalan politics can no longer base its ideas in only the language:

...the issue of Catalan political separatism was

repudiated by its own state government in September 1991, and now seems politically dead except among a few nostalgists and rhetoricians....it could hardly be expected to survive the real democratic changes of Spain after 1975. (Hughes x)

Surprisingly, it has survived. People supporting autonomy can still be seen selling "Catalan Autonomy" t-shirts to visitors on Las Ramblas, a fashionable street in Barcelona. The movement earned its biggest concession during the 1992 Olympic Games in Barcelona. The Catalan officials could not decide on whether to use the Catalan or Spanish alphabet for the parade of Nations in the Opening Ceremonies. So that no Catalan was offended, the officials decided to use the French alphabet--even though the games were in Spain. Madrid, and the rest of the Spanish citizens who were not Catalan were mortified.

At the same time, the language, except among the die-hard enthusiasts, is waning in popularity. All of the street signs in Catalonia are in Catalan, yet many younger people do not feel autonomy or even the language is necessary. Many younger Catalans claim the 'need' for autonomy is "stupid."

They believe their region could never survive without Spain's help (Montañer, interview).

While the languages have accomplished political successes in their respective regions, sometimes using the languages causes political problems for the autonomy movements. Several political movements within the regions (both Basque and Catalan) have been accused of discrimination against Spanish speakers. These claims come from migrant workers from other parts of Spain:

A factor that contributes significantly to the intensity of language policy conflicts, is the internal heterogeneity of these two regions. Over 1/3 of the populations of these regions were born in other parts of Spain and speak Castilian Spanish as a maternal tongue. Choices involving language policy are made more difficult to resolve, by virtue of the fact that bilingual policies may lay the groundwork for institutionalized linguistic discrimination against immigrant minorities. (Shabad 444-45)

Even so, in recent years the new leaders have continued to emphasize the language of their native culture.

Culture, Politics, and Economics

After examining how politics and language are tied together in these regions, it is very easy to see how important the languages are. The Catalans with their standardized language have been more successful with their autonomy movement. For example, during the Second Republic, Catalonia received its Statute of Autonomy in 1932. The Basque region had to wait until 1936. This one example shows how the Basques have had a harder time uniting to help gain that political concession. But the languages, as important as they are, are not the only aspect of the autonomy movements. Many citizens claim their region should have autonomy because of cultural, economic and political differences.

The cultural development of a region is a very important factor within any autonomy movement. Part of that culture, is of course the language. The different cultures of each of these ethnicities have used their languages in different ways. This has already been discussed. Yet many times the language was not the only aspect of a particular culture that helped create nationalism:

On the cultural level the unity of the Spanish nation

was to be expressed and symbolized by the unity of Spanish culture and language. Franco regarded Basque culture, especially the language, as an excuse for and sign of separatism. Therefore, the regime unleashed a thorough campaign of central repression. The public use of Basque greetings, traditional garments, folklore, Basque names, publications and the teaching of Euskera were strictly forbidden. (Heiberg 91)

The Basque nation was not the only one that suffered. The Catalans also were forbidden to speak their language, wear traditional costumes or dance the traditional dance, the sardana.

Overall, the Catalan culture survived more thoroughly intact than the Basque culture. One reason for this was the emphasis on literature. Catalan was not just a vernacular, but a cultural literary language. Catalan had a strong "written history." Basque did not. This has been shown to be true by the importance of the Joc Florals and early use of Catalan as a diplomatic language.

In other words, because of the literary movement, the history of Catalonia was written down and remembered.

Because there was no written history for the Basques, the Basque culture suffered. While the Basques may not have had a literary past, they had a political past, as the Catalans did, "Catalans brooded on the memory of their great medieval trading empire and their independent political institutions destroyed by the 'Castilian conquerors' in 1716" (Carr 62).

The trading empire was just one aspect of political and legal autonomy for the Catalans. Their political system, like their own language was organized very early in their history. They were totally autonomous, and unified at the same time. The Catalans very much had an empire by the 1200s. They seemed to have always been civilized, and had never been mentioned as barbarians like the Basques:

...together with England, Catalonia was one of the first societies to grant itself what amounted to a written feudal constitution...the Ustages (1150) whose very title (established customs and practices) betrays the fact that the laws the document proclaimed had been already in existence for a very long time. Among these laws, the most outstanding was the explicit acknowledgement of legal equality between burghers and nobility. (Giner 5)

These laws were essentially a pactist code. In other words, the Ustages were made under the idea that the parties involved were entering the agreement under their own accord. This pact was created for and executed between only the Catalanian provinces.

The Ustages were actually a combination of Hispano-Romano, Visigoth and Carolingian legal ideas. They set the standard for all the feudal principles. They regulated all of the legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Because they were formed in 1150, they are twelve years older than Westminster in England (Enciclopedia Hispánica, v.14, 187).

Through these pacts, the Catalans had a "head start" on gaining autonomy. These laws were enacted 13 years after the alliance with Aragon was created, but did not infringe upon the principality's role within the diplomatic agreement. Catalonia continued ruling itself, building the trading empire of the 13th and 14th centuries.

Even with a trading empire, Castile always seemed to get the best of Catalonia. In the years 1229-1245, the Catalan sovereigns had managed to fight and win back much of the Mediterranean coastline from the Moors. "Cartagena, Murcia

and Lorca were conquered by the Catalan-Aragonese armies" (Azevedo 306). However, these trophies were turned over to Castile in the Treaty of Almisra in 1244.

The Treaty of Almisra would not be the only time the Catalan or even Basque territorial rights was given over to the Castilians. During the reign of Philip IV the Treaty of the Pyrenees gave territorial area to France. It created the permanent boundary between France and Spain and the geographic problems for the Basques and Catalans. Both regions were split with the new border (Giner 3).

For a second time, the Castilians had taken territorial areas from the regions. The Castilians kept trying to influence the Catalans and suppress their nationalism. The Catalans resented the intrusion of the Castilians. They began uprisings against both Spain and France. They wanted to unify their territory once again. This war of independence began in 1640. Still, by the 18th century, Catalonia was politically and culturally repressed. The Catalans had been beaten:

The end of the war of independence against the combined Bourbon forces of France and Spain (1714) has rightly

been seen as the lowest point in the history of the Catalans. Their rights were abolished, the use of Spanish was imposed for any official transactions. Castilian law was enforced, a great number of their institutions were destroyed. The Catalan parliament, one of the oldest in Europe, and the "cabinet" within it, the Generalitat, was dissolved. (Giner 15)

These actions were formally called the Decree of the Nueva Planta. It outlawed everything from the development of magazines or journals to public use of the language (Rodgers 238).

Through the rest of the 18th and 19th centuries the political role of Catalan did not change. When the cultural aspect of the language had its renaissance in the 1840s, the political standing which had been silenced for centuries, found its voice again. The parties started forming and Catalans began declaring their allegiance to their language and land. The proud language of regionalism was changed to that of nationalism. These ideas were reinforced by the new political leader, Prat de la Riba:

Shorn of its linguistic exaggerations, the programme of

Catalanism set forth in a series of resolutions known as the Bases de Manresa (1892); [which included] home rule for the Catalan speaking state with government posts reserved for born or nationalized Catalonians. (Carr 64)

The Bases, however, never really gained any political strength. Legally, because Catalonia was not autonomous from Spain, the laws could not be enacted. Most of the posts the Bases wanted to reserve for the Catalans were appointed by the king. He would not appoint a separatist Catalan unless it was in his own best interest. But even with these political setbacks Catalanism was prevalent within the region. Because of the political turmoil of the centralized state, and the growing nationalism of the separatist regions, Prat de la Riba and other leading political Catalans decided on trying a new approach to gain concessions from the Madrid government. They would form a political party and gain seats in the Cortes, the seat of the Spanish federal government, located in Madrid.

The first attempt to create a party failed. The party collapsed because of the disunion of the Catalan politicians. They found it would almost be impossible to create one party.

They did not give up however. The political leaders reformulated the failed party into the Lliga Regionalista party in 1901. This party was, in the early part of the 20th century "the most powerful and effective force Catalanism was to create" (Carr 65). It was also one of the most conservative movements. The Lliga:

...wished to replace the extremism of nationalist nostalgia...by a concrete clearly defined programme of regional autonomy, which they could hope to achieve by the day to day task of propaganda and political pressure in Madrid. (Carr 65)

The Lliga was trying to find autonomy for the Catalan people within the Spanish state. In reaction to the successful formation of the Lliga, two radical groups formed, one of petit bourgeois republicans, and the other of violent anarchists. (Payne, "Nationalism..." 482-483) Both of these groups fought for autonomy outside the Spanish state.

The politicians involved did not stop trying to unify their region in these early years of formation. They tried to use the momentum of Catalanism as their unifying power, but it did not work, until the beginning of the 20th century.

Political unification happened briefly in 1906 with the Solidaridad Catalana. It was a block of all the Catalan parties, excluding only the most radical and anarchist of them. This political solidarity was not perfect however. There were many problems that had to be worked out at the founding conference. The leaders all managed to cooperate and compromise; this helped form the weak political coalition. The greatest success came:

...one year later, in March 1907, [when] it reorganized as an electoral coalition and presented a single slate of candidates in the election of deputies throughout the four Catalan provinces, in order to capture the entire regional representation...it demanded recognition of the "regional personality" of Catalonia through specific measures: the creation of a new regional government, financed by its own fiscal system and jurisdiction over the four Catalan provinces in public works, education, and social welfare. (Ullman 80-1)

Yet none of these concessions were ever granted to the Catalans. Because the representatives came from a broad political spectrum, the coalition existed in name only. The

members fought in and amongst themselves, for their own constituencies. Like the first political party, Solidaridad Catalana failed, and each separate movement went back to being its own entity.

The Lliga particularly "lost ground" after the collapse of Solidaridad Catalan because Prat de la Riba was one of the strongest supporters of the coalition. It was not only because of the loss of the cooperative party that the Lliga found itself with fewer followers, but many Catalans were finding it was becoming more and more conservative. The leaders no longer wished for autonomy clauses or linguistic rights, they simply wanted a form of ethnic recognition.

Political division was not the only problem facing the Catalans. Anti-clericalism came as a reaction against the centralized government in Madrid. Because the Catholic church so strongly supported the Madrid government, the Catalan citizens reacted against the church. To them, it symbolized the government. These problems grew progressively worse until the first decade of the 20th century. Churches were burned and clergymen died before the Catalan region returned to normalcy. This chaos continued on and off up

until the 1920s.

The parties continued working for the Catalans all during this traumatic period. Political changes happening at the federal level left parties guessing as to who was in charge. Some politicians wanted the king's absolute powers reinstated so the political turmoil would stop.

The end of most political parties and actions came in 1923 when Primo de Rivera instituted his dictatorship. After the cultural renaissance and finding of the Catalan political voice, all of the work towards autonomy was forcibly stopped. Although Primo de Rivera had claimed to be a supporter of regions' rights, he silenced Catalan and Basque movements. He outlawed the languages and visible celebration of the cultures. The Catalan situation in particular returned to a pre-1840s situation.

When the dictatorship was broken in 1930 there was once again hope for the Catalans. A new constitutional republic was formed, and the Catalans found their situation improved. In 1932, the Autonomy Statute for Catalonia was passed. For the first time in over 500 years, the Catalonians found themselves with a form of self-rule. Even the political parties of the early 1900s had not succeeded in gaining this

special concession. It would only last four short years until Franco came and took those rights away again.

The situation has changed dramatically within the last 18 years. Now that Franco is gone, the country has had a rebirth of democracy, and with it, regionalism. Opinions and ideas are now openly expressed in Catalan. Schools are teaching the language, and because of the 1979 constitution, this is all legally acceptable. The region was once again granted autonomy with the new constitution. Catalonia is technically not a separate country, but an autonomous region within a federation of states. Its role is comparable to any of the 50 states of the United States.

The Basques never had an autonomous empire. The Castilians annexed them into their empire at a very early stage of political development. From the very beginning, the Basques had a different type of political development, especially after the annexation.

After the Castilians had taken the Basque kingdom and incorporated it, the Basques and the Castilian rulers created the *Pacto Monárquico*. This pact "granted recognition to, and respect for the autonomy of the different regions, under the

Castilian crown" (Heiberg 1). This pact supposedly ensured a certain degree of autonomy to the Basques. Thus, like the *Ustages* for the Catalan provinces, the Basques and the Spaniards thought of their relationship as a contractual agreement between two equal states rather than as one of superior and subordinate power.

The pact seemed to work for a while. Between the mid 1400s and 1700, the Castilian royalty did not try to force a unified royal administration upon the Iberian peninsula. "The Basque provinces, Navarra, Catalonia, and Aragon maintained distinct legal codes and autonomous political institutions" (Heiberg 1); therefore, the Basque region was free to do what it wanted to do, as long as it did not interfere with the Castilian government. Nevertheless, having autonomous political institutions did not guarantee cultural rights. These regions were free to do what they wanted to do as long as they spoke Spanish.

With the general stability of regions and the formation of the *Pacto Monárquico*, the Basques began "ruling themselves," and for a while they had tremendous success, politically and economically. They had found a way to rule themselves that

was agreeable to the Castilian crown. It was a constitution, a system called "*los fueros*" or the foral system:

Los fueros were collections of local laws and customs together with special economic and political immunities underwritten by the Kings of Castile (and later Spain) in return for political allegiance to the monarchy. Although the *fueros* of different Basque areas showed many similarities, particularly in domestic law, one effect of the *fueros* was to establish each Basque area as a little world of its own. The Basque *fueros* never institutionalized a wider Basque unity (Heiberg 20).

The Basques suffered political disunification as well as problems with the geographic boundaries and dialectical differences. Regardless of the obvious problems, the foral system became the foundation of Basque economic and political life by the 13th and 14th centuries, and would continue to be so until the late 19th century.

By the late 19th century, the power of the *fueros* was declining. By 1876, this right was taken away by Spain at the end of the Second Carlist War because of the Basque support for the Carlists. It has always been a steadfast

point in the relations between Spain and the Basques that they would like the fuero system reinstated.

Intra-regionally, at the end of the 19th century the Basques were having problems. The ideological splits between the Catalan political leaders also occurred in Basque politics. The parties that were forming in the late 1800s were not cohesive at all. The regions were not unified and this prevented the development their own political systems and ideas.

In 1895, Sabino de Arana founded the *Partido Vasco Nacional* (PNV) or the Basque National Party. The founding members were nationalistic and conservative (Payne, Basque, 72). They tried to unify the region politically but their efforts did not have tremendous success. Part of the problem, was the fact that the party more or less consciously created Basque nationalism.

Up until this time, the Basques lived separate lives; they considered themselves different, even from each other. Their dialects were different, and at times seemed to be different languages. Unlike Catalonia, they had never been unified in the sense of a modern nation. The PNV and Arana created 13

principles which, according to Arana, would unify the seven Basque states. He wanted to create a Confederation of the states in the Basque region, and unify them as a single country. Each region had to agree to follow these principles before they could be considered a member state. Here is an example of the thirteen principles from the Vizcaya region:

- 1) Vizcaya, on organizing itself as a republican confederation, does so on the basis of the political doctrine enunciated by Sabino de Arana under the the slogan, "God and Old Laws," which is expressed in the following articles.
- 2) Vizcaya will be Roman, apostolic and Catholic in every manifestation of its internal life and its relations with other peoples.
- 3) **Vizcaya will be freely reconstituted. It will be constituted principally, if not exclusively, with the families of Euzkeran race.**
- 4) **It will establish Euskera as the official language.**
- 5) Vizcaya will establish a clear and marked distinction between the religious and political orders.
- 6) Vizcaya will establish complete and unconditional subordination of the political to the religious; of the

state to the church.

- 7) Being through its race, language, faith, character, Vizcaya will join itself with six other regions to form a whole called the Basque Country without diminishing its own autonomy.
- 8) The Euskeran Confederation will constitute itself by the free and express will of each of the Basque states.
- 9) **The necessary bases for solid and lasting national unity are: unity of race in so far as possible, and Catholic unity.**
- 10) The essential bases with which the Basque states form their union are: liberty to separate, and equality of rights and duties within the Confederation.
- 11) Once the Confederation is established, all states will have identical rights and obligations within it.
- 12) The Confederation will bind them only in the social order and in their relations with foreigners; they will otherwise retain their traditional absolute independence.
- 13) All of these articles are irrevocable.

(Payne, Basque, 72-3)

The party stressed racial purity and Catholic religion above all the other principles, by mentioning them twice. By doing this, Arana de-emphasized the Basque language. At the

doing this, Arana de-emphasized the Basque language. At the time, this seemed like a logical decision due to the importance of racial purity and the religion.

One can clearly see how the regions were trying to use their political parties in their claim for autonomy. The cultural and historic backgrounds also show how the region tried to gain, or had independence. Yet one of the best reasons these regions claim they should have autonomy is economic.

These regions are the economic powerhouses of Spain. No other regions have comparable amounts of infrastructure. No other regions, except the Baleric Islands which are part of Catalonia, have as a high Gross Domestic Products (GDPs).

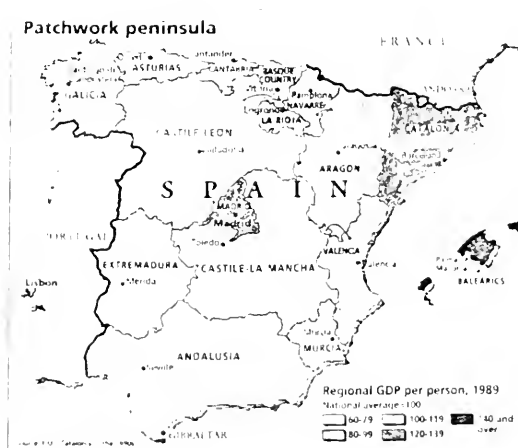


Fig. 4. Regional GDPs per person, The Economist. v.323, n7756; Apr 25, 1992.

economically. Woolard claims they are unlike many other regions. Usually when the region is a sizable minority in a centralist state, underdevelopment is very common. The author states:

Catalonia is something of an anomaly among minority regions in centralized states. Although it is a periphery that has long suffered political subordination and cultural and linguistic domination by the Castilian center, it has not experienced the economic underdevelopment that typifies such regions. (2)

It was not just Catalonia that was so developed. The Basque region also was considered highly developed. It had an abundance of iron and lumber, natural harbors and good geographical settings. With the natural resources it was very easy to create a base infrastructure and industrialize the region. The political and economic concessions of the fueros also helped industrialization. The fueros functioned well through the nineteenth century and economic expansion occurred.

Spain's imperialism also helped the Basques develop a strong economy during the 17th and 18th centuries. With the

expansion of the Spanish empire into the "new world," the Basques were considered financially 'stronger' than many of their Spanish counterparts. The Basque region had the capital to invest in the new world:

For the Basques, the expansion of the Spanish empire, with its attendant demands for trade, commerce, and industry, provided the material incentives for economic development; then 18th century liberalism offered the philosophical justification for growth. (Payne, Basque, 22)

The expansionist policies brought back precious metals from the new world, and helped the depleted Spanish economy. This continued throughout the 17th and 18th centuries.

It was during the early part of the 19th century that this process ceased. With the internal problems in Spain, (such as the War for Independence against France) the South American colonies declared themselves independent (1808-1825), and Spain then lost a good deal of international influence. This also meant the revenues of the new world were not arriving in Spain any more. The country experienced several civil wars because of different royal factions and

heirs to the throne. Because of economic problems from the many years of war and lost revenue, economic change had to occur.

The Basque region had been a strong supporter of the Carlists through the civil war. The Carlists were a political faction supporting Carlos, who was Fernando VII's brother. This group also wanted the return of an absolute monarchy, which would ensure the continuation of the fueros. Finally, they did not want Fernando's only heir and daughter ruling over the Spanish throne because she was female.

When the Carlists lost, Spain imposed economic sanctions upon the region, taking away the fueros. It was not just a reaction from the Spanish state however. Another reason the fueros might have been revoked was the spreading economic liberalism. (Economic liberalism states that the wealth of a nation or country is increased when there is free trade. One of the main economic incentives behind the fueros was strict protectionist policies.)

With the abrupt end of an economic and political institution and the new economic liberalism spreading throughout the country, the time was perfect for the

development of reactionary Basque nationalism. These were the ideas that the parties like the PNV were founded upon.

When the new nationalism crept into the economic ideas of the mid 19th century, the pillars of the Basque economy were the metallurgical industry and agriculture (Payne 32). By 1876, the agricultural sector was being dominated by the industrial sector.

The importance of industry emerged with Franco's coming into power. After the Spanish Civil War there was great economic strife in Spain. The country was politically and economically isolated from the rest of the world. It had very few countries to trade with, and many of the factories had been destroyed during the war. Because not much bombing had occurred in the Basque region (except for a couple of selected cities,) the industrial base of the Basques was intact. Franco started using that industrial base to revive the whole country economically. He stifled the nationalistic sentiments of the Basques so there was no reaction or opposition against his plans.

Because Franco was using the Basque industrial base, the region grew economically--much faster than most of the rest

of Spain. Under Franco the Basques might have been culturally and politically humiliated, but economically they thrived (Clark, The Basques 45). Clark continues to provide more statistical information:

The expansion of the Spanish economy ran at Japanese levels for most of the Franco period. By 1975, Spain had become the 10th most important industrialized country in the world...While Spanish industrial expansion generated increased prosperity for large numbers of Spaniards, under Franco, the Basques enjoyed the highest per capita income in Spain, averaging some 35% to 60% higher than the national norm. (The Basques 68)

The Basque region was not the only area that was successful economically. The economic history of the Catalan region also emphasized investment and expansion. The most important economic development in this region was the middle class. While other regions of Spain had middle classes, none were quite as politically active as the Catalan middle class. The "bourgeoisie" of the 18th and 19th centuries became a strong influence on the regional society:

...Catalan is solidly middle class (as well as working class); it has been difficult to extricate Catalan identity from the bourgeoisie background. The history of Catalunya is a history of landowning farmers, of artisans, shopkeepers, and workshop owners...of merchants and industrialists, of a concern for the serious business of money making. (Paulston 51)

This strong middle class was in part responsible for the tremendous trading empire of the 13th and 14th centuries. Barcelona had always been a textile industry hub. But the true industrialization of the region did not occur until the 18th century. At that time, coal and iron became the most important industries in Catalonia. Unlike the Basques however, the Catalans did not have many natural resources. They had a good port, but few raw materials. All the iron and coal had to be imported. Even with this production handicap, by the 19th century the economic figures of the Catalan region far outshined those of the rest of Spain:

By the mid 1850s more than a quarter of Spain's industrial gross national product came from Catalunya. The principate earned twice as much on manufacture, and

half as much on agriculture as the rest of the country.

Apart from the Basque territory, it was Spain's sole industrial belt. (Hughes 254)

Like the Basques, the Catalans were affected by Spain's political strife in the nineteenth century. The Catalans had their own form of economic agreements with Spain. These policies, like the *fueros*, centered on tax exemptions and protectionist policies for the Catalan industries. The Catalan industrialists wanted to keep protectionist policies that had existed for centuries. Clearly, protectionism in the 19th century had become a major political issue within Catalonia:

The tariff issue would become the biggest economic factor in Catalanist politics...it produced a middle class mind set peculiar to Catalunya, by which manufacturers became vigorous and even rabid apostles of the local, the provincial, the traditional, and leery of foreign influences in the culture. (Hughes 237)

The Catalans were literally closing off markets for their manufactured goods. This was not difficult during Franco's time, as the country was very much isolated politically and

economically. After the death of Franco in 1975, both the Basques and the Catalans found themselves integrating their economy into the world economy for the first time.

Under Franco the companies did not have to integrate into the world economy because one of Franco's economic tenets was to make Spain self-sufficient. He realized that because of the lack of natural resources, this dream of becoming financially independent would be impossible. He started emphasizing tourism in Spain as a way of creating revenue.

Because of this, the economic strength of these regions may appear superficial. The development of the regions have not been very uniform within the territories. Overall development was shoddy. Except for select cities, outside of the industrial developed areas, the country side was and still is vastly underdeveloped. Only the coastal areas developed, the interiors of the regions remain underdeveloped. This may be because of the change in Franco's ideology. The coastal areas developed because of tourism.

This was only one problem for the regions. The regions' economic successes also were drawing immigrants from other parts of Spain. These migrant workers did not speak the

language or know the regional cultural traditions.

While some of the immigrants had a hard time assimilating into their new societies, other immigrants tried their best to become citizens of the region. For example, many of the outsiders joined nationalistic movements. Some outsiders went so far as to teach their children the region's native language. But the racially pure Basques and the native Catalan speakers have never fully accepted the newcomers into their respective societies. Hughes claims of the Catalans:

Whatever the law might say, the popular definition of a Catalan are all cultural and impossible to legislate. The basic one is language. Nobody can be considered Catalan unless he or she speaks Catalan naturally, as a first string language. (30)

Some still resent these people from coming from 'backward' parts of Spain.

In January of 1993, major changes took place within the Spanish industrial sector. Because of the European Economic Community, in which Spain is a member, Basque and Catalan industries have been given quotas for the amount of steel and manufactured goods they can export. President Clinton also

limited the amount of goods coming into the United States. Because of these two drops in product consumption, the Basque region has fallen on to economic hard times. Just since January, the Basque region cannot viably claim economic ability as a reason worthy of autonomy.

Yet Catalonia is still competitive in comparison to the rest of the Spanish state. The Catalan region alone may be supporting a good deal of Spain's economy. More than 1/5 of the Spanish economy (through heavy industry and exports) is generated within this region. Not only this, but over 30% of the medium to large corporations located in Spain have their headquarters in Barcelona. (The Economist S16)

In the past, the economic situation in both regions was very good. Both the Basque region and Catalonia tended to have very well developed industrialized bases, much more so than that of Andalucia or Extremadura. And except for this past January, economics still might have been a viable reason for autonomy in the Basque region.

With the economic differences, the Catalans believe they still have a legitimate call for autonomy. The regional government claims Spain is taking away their revenues through

taxes and bankrupting the area. A case can be made for this argument, as every Catalan may contribute \$1.00 worth of taxes, but only receive back \$.68 in the services for which he is paying (The Economist pg S17). Without the Spanish taxes, this region claims it could subsist by itself.

Conclusions

The Basques and the Catalans have not solved all of their controversial issues surrounding language usage and autonomy. The autonomy movements of these regions have tried to use language to gain political and economic concessions from the central government. Many people within the regions feel the difference of language is enough of a reason for their region to be politically, economically, and culturally separate from Spain. Many times, as has been shown, the language must be accompanied by drives for political and cultural independence. The language cannot accomplish autonomy for the region by itself.

Since the passing of Franco's era, Spain has adopted a solution never successfully used in another state: "By instituting bilingualism within its dual language regions,

Spain appears to have opted for a solution unique among Western industrialized societies" (Shabad 444). Article 3 of the 1979 Constitution guarantees the linguistic rights of the areas. While Spanish is the official language of the state and the regional governments, in regions with a minority language, that respective language is also official.

This is only a political compromise. Socially, a policy of bilingualism is still not fully accepted. One Catalanian claims:

Our language has never died...yet for all official purposes we have to use another. We are ruled, judged, and [in some cases] taught the language of our conquerors...The imposition of another language is a constant reminder of our subjection (Peers 131).

It clearly can be said that linguistic nationalism abounds within these regions. Both ethnicites know they have survived through years of repression. They think they can continue to do so.

One cannot be sure if these regions deserve autonomy or not. The Catalans make a very good case as to why they

should be autonomous. However, in this world of interdependence, autonomy might lead to the inevitable failure of the new nation. Larger states dominate international economic policies. As a small, separate nation-state, the Catalans or Basques would not be as competitive in a world economy. It is financially better for them to be the economically strong regions of a larger country than be a minute country with little economic impact.

Spain also has politically made the language situation moot. Because of the linguistic freedoms and bilingualism of the regions, neither regions can claim that the language and thus their culture is being intentionally stifled. Perhaps culture and politics and language are not the deciding factors in the success of an autonomy movement. This can be seen in the words of one famous Catalan politician:

A people is a fact of mentality, of language, of feelings. It is a historic fact, and it is a fact of spiritual ethnicity. Finally it is a fact of will. The first characteristic of a people has to be the will to exist. It is this will, more than anything else, which assures survival and, above all, the promotion and

blossoming of a people. (Hughes 21-22)

With freedom to use their language, economic strength of the region, and political and cultural compromises, the ethnicities of the Basque and Catalan regions of Spain will continue their existence if they can unite behind their causes.

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